



IT strategy update

June 2017

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1. Improving our IT: progress to date



Shared service implementation and infrastructure programme

Our IT strategy set out plans to refresh the Council's IT infrastructure and put in place a new shared service with Brent to support the IT. The main elements of this strategy have now been delivered:

- a new desktop environment and 'thin clients' have been rolled out across the Council;
- our 'back end' infrastructure has been completely updated and new 'failover' arrangements have been put in place, which will significantly increase our resilience;
- tools for flexible working have been rolled out including iPads / iPhones and remote working from personal devices;
- the shared service has successfully taken over from Capita and introduced a new online portal to handle requests. Performance against key indicators is now at or around target levels.

Nevertheless given the pace of technological change there are a number of areas where we are planning to make further changes, in particular the shared service will be :

- rolling out new corporate tools including Office 365 and SharePoint Online
- re-procuring our network infrastructure – to replace old kit and improve monitoring and protection of our key systems; and
- re-procuring our fixed line and mobile telephony to cut costs and improve functionality.

Shared service and infrastructure



Digital programme

Delivering the IT strategy is key to enabling digital transformation.

Work stream	Progress to date	Current priorities
Adult social care	Mobile working introduced, digital front door launched, key finance processes streamlined	Streamlining core business processes, improving charging processes and improved debt collection
Children and Young People	Mobile working introduced, new MASH launched	Streamlining core business processes, supporting wider business change to encourage in-house fostering
Customer services	Environmental services online, new online forms for Council Tax and Benefits launched	Automation of Council Tax and Benefits processes, streamlining the complaints process, reducing Council Tax fraud using data analytics, redesigning housing services and tackling homelessness
Digital Council	Paperless Council meetings trialled, paperless Courts launched	HR, finance and payroll modernisation, smarter working programme and estates strategy

Digital programme



2. Improving our IT: next steps



Extending the shared service to Southwark

An opportunity has arisen to extend to our IT shared service with Brent to cover Southwark Council. The Mayor agreed to the direction of travel (8 February) and since then officers have focused on detailed work to establish the feasibility and benefits. In particular the benefits for Lewisham would be:

- reduced cost through the ability to share fixed costs with another partner, which has the potential to make a significant contribution towards next year's savings target;
- a more resilient IT service with a greater ability to attract and retain the right people;
- further opportunities to work collaboratively with another partner on digital transformation based on a shared IT platform.

Mayor and Cabinet (19 July) will be asked to agree the approach. Key features include:

- transitional arrangements will be funded by Southwark with additional resources put in place to ensure that service levels are protected in across the whole partnership; and
- the current governance arrangements will be extended to cover three parties. Currently the current shared service is overseen by a Joint Committee of members and Shared Management Board of officers.

Shared service: Southwark



Creating a shared application support team with Brent

Currently Brent and Lewisham have separate teams that support and develop key business IT applications. Digital transformation will mean a greater reliance on these systems and make it even more important to make the best use of them. There's the potential to create a shared application support team with Brent, which would :

- create a more resilient service;
- allow the Councils to share best practice and common skills. Brent and Lewisham already have a number of common systems (e.g. planning and education) where it would be possible to share expertise; and
- work collaboratively to develop existing systems and put in new systems. For example Lewisham and Brent are already working together to put in place a common debt collection system.

Mayor and Cabinet (19 July) will be asked to agree to the creation of a new shared application team. Key points include:

- the shared application team will form part of our existing shared service with Brent and be governed through the existing arrangements (the Joint Committee of members and a Shared Management Board);
- in line with the existing shared service arrangements members of the shared team will be employed by Brent on behalf of both Councils. TUPE will apply in the normal way. The new shared team will continue to have a strong presence in both Catford and Wembley and it is not expected that the primary location of staff will change;
- the introduction of the new team will be broadly budget neutral, with any efficiencies created allowing the team to increase service levels in other areas;
- each Council will determine its own application strategy. There is likely to be a number of areas where it would make sense to move to common systems (e.g. where one Council has a better system than the other). However the decision on what application to use in each Council should be determined by business requirements rather than IT priorities; and
- at this stage Southwark would not form part of the shared application team but this is something that it may be worth looking at in the future.

Shared application team



3. Update on members' IT issues

Update on members' IT issues

Recent developments:

- Paperless meetings (mod.gov) – successful pilot and wider rollout in train
- Lewisham desktop available on the iPad
- Laptop refresh

What's next:

- June: wider roll out of paperless meetings. Dedicated Mod.gov & iPad training session for members
- July: Microsoft Office /Skype on your mobile (Office 365)
- September – New SharePoint sites accessible from your mobile; new Council intranet